

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 EB-11 COME-00 MC-02 TRSE-00 AID-20 IGA-02

ACDA-19 RSR-01 /163 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8693

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, CG, FR

SUBJECT: MOBUTU VISIT TO PARIS

REF: KINSHASA 2422

1. IN COURSE OF UNOFFICIAL VISIT TO PARIS MARCH 26, ZAIRIAN PRESIDENT MOBUTU ANNOUNCED FOLLOWING LUNCH WITH PRESIDENT POMPIDOU THAT POMPIDOU WOULD VISIT ZAIRE IN EARLY 1974. IN ADDITION MOBUTU STATED THAT HE HAD MET DIRECTOR OF FRENCH AVIATION COMPANY DASSAULT AND THAT FRENCH AIR FORCE DELEGATION WOULD VISIT ZAIRE BEGINNING APRIL 2. MOBUTU'S RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF MIRAGE AIRCRAFT IMPLIED THAT AIRCRAFT PURCHASE WOULD BE NORMAL DEVELOPMENT GIVEN EXISTING MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH FRANCE. MOBUTU NOTED THAT ZAIRIAN ARMORED DIVISION ALREADY EQUIPPED WITH FRENCH PANHARD TANKS.

2. COMMENT: MOBUTU'S COMMENT CONFIRMS EARLIER RUMORS THAT ZAIRE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING FRENCH AIRCRAFT PURCHASE. ACCORDING TO LE MONDE, ZAIRE CONSIDERING PURCHASE OF BETWEEN 15 AND 20 MIRAGE V'S WHICH IT DESCRIBES AS SIMPLIFIED MIRAGE III. LE MONDE ADDS THAT NORTHROP IS SIMULTANEOUSLY TRYING TO SELL F-5'S AND POINTS OUT THAT ZAIRE HAS ALREADY BOUGHT

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20 ITALIAN MACCHI TRAINER AIRCRAFT AND FRENCH PUMA SA-330 HELICOPTERS. POMPIDOU VISIT TO ZAIRE WILL PROBABLY FORM PART OF LARGER TOUR TAKING HIM TO AT LEAST SOME OF FRANCOPHONE COUNT JOINT
G-10/ EC MEETING, WAS TO TRY TO GET US TO ACCEPT SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPORT OF EXCHANGE RATE STRUCTURE RESULTING FROM SECOND
DOLLAR DEVALUATION. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY WERE CERTAINLY MINDFUL THAT US CAPABILITIES IN THIS REGARD WERE LIMITED. WHETHER OR NOT OUTCOME OF MARCH 16 MINISTERIAL MEETING LIVED UP COMPLETELY TO THEIR ASPIRATIONS, FRENCH AUTHORITIES WERE CAREFUL IN THEIR PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT MEETING TO underscore SPIRIT OF COOPERATION THAT PREVAILED AMONG PARTICIPANTS AND TO FLAG US ATTITUDE RE POSSIBLE INTERVENTION ON EXCHANGE MARKETS AS IMPORTANT FACTOR IN BRINGING DELIBERATIONS TO SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION. SUBSEQUENTLY, IN PRIVATE, SOME FRENCH OFFICIALS HAVE SHOWN LACK OF ENTHUSIASM ABOUT RESULTS. THEY SEEM RESIGNED TO IDEA THAT US INTERVENTION, IF IT DOES IN FACT OCCUR, WILL BE MODEST IN SCALE, AND THAT IN THIS REGARD, POST- MARCH 16 SITUATION IS LITTLE, IF AT ALL, DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE PREVAILING BEFORE THAT DATE.

(B) PRIVATE REACTIONS: GENERALLY SPEAKING, FIRST REACTIONS OF FRENCH BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL OPINION TO MARCH 16 MINISTERIAL MEETING WERE FAVORABLE, A STATE OF MIND THAT WAS CERTAINLY FOSTERED BY POSITIVE PUBLIC STANCE OF FRENCH GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, WITH PASSAGE OF TIME AND DETAILED SCRUTINY OF MARCH 16 PRESS COMMUNIQUE, CURRENT OF SCEPTICISM HAS TENDED TO DEVELOP. THIS SCEPTICISM RELATES PRECISELY TO WHAT NEW, IF ANYTHING, US UNDERTOOK TO DO, AND CENTERS ON QUESTIONS OF EXCHANGE MARKET INTERVENTION AND US MONETARY POLICY. FAR FROM GIVING US ANY RECOGNITION FOR OFFERS TO COOPERATE, THESE CRITICS DEPLORE WHAT THEY SEE AS DELIBERATE US EFFORT TO AVOID SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING ANY PARTICULAR EXCHANGE RATE PATTERN AND AS US REFUSAL, IN FORMULATING AMERICAN MONETARY POLICY, TO GIVE ANY WEIGHT WHATSOEVER TO EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS. CRITICS ARE NO LESS SEVERE RE BEHAVIOR OF EUROPEAN FINANCIAL AUTHORITIES, WHOM THEY LAMBASTE FOR FAILURE TO PUT SCREWS ON US IN TWO RECENT PARIS SESSIONS AND THEREBY TO BRING ABOUT " REAL" SETTLEMENT THAT THESE CRITICS ARGUE IS ESSENTIAL TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN DOLLAR AND IN MONETARY SYSTEM. (THEIR PRESCRIPTION TYPICALLY RUNS TO COMBINATION OF CONSOLIDATION AND DOLLAR CONVERTIBILITY, BACKED BY MASSIVE US DRAWING ON IMF AND PERHAPS BY STABILIZATION LOAN TO US FROM EUROPE AND JAPAN.)

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THUS THEY TEND MORE AND MORE TO REGARD THE PARIS MEETINGS AS A "LOST OPPORTUNITY" -- TO BORROW THE WORDS USED BY PUNDIT ROBERT MARJOLIN IN ADDRESSING ONE GROUP OF OPINION LEADERS ON THIS TOPIC LAST WEEK.

IRWIN

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